

Mid-Week Devotional

Having Magic Grits

Read Acts 12:1-17 *“You are out of your mind...”* 12:15

This story I have always found very interesting. Here we have the story of two of Jesus’ disciples, one, James who is put to death, while Peter is set free by an angel of the Lord.

Assuming that the church was praying for both of them, why was only one freed? Was it a



special prayer they prayed for Peter? To borrow a line from the movie, “My Cousin Vinnie,” “Do want us to believe that you have magic grits...that grits cook faster in your pots then in the rest of the entire grit eating world?!” I think not, for the church did not even believe their prayers would be answered in the first place! We know this because after the angel frees Peter he goes to the house where the church was still praying for his release, knocks on the gate, and identifies himself to a servant girl named Rhoda. After recognizing Peter’s voice, she goes inside to tell the rest. You’re out of your mind, they tell her...not even bothering to check for themselves. You would have thought that if they had been serious about the prayers they had been engaged in all night, they would have at least run outside to verify her story. But no, they had no faith in their prayer ever being answered.

Well this raises a good question, so why pray. Do we pray simply because the Bible tells us to bring everything to God in prayer and supplication? (Phil 4:6) I admit that sometimes I find myself praying for this or that, not really expecting anything to change and that’s ok because prayer is not about getting what we want. If prayer were about getting what we want, we might as well pray to the meteorologists on the evening news; even they get it right 50% of the time! No, prayer is never about getting, rather it is always about giving, giving God glory, and enjoying Him forever. That is why the church prays and that is why we, like those who prayed for Peter’s release, never imagine that it will really happen. You see for them, and for us, putting our belief in prayer misses the point, for the point of prayer is to place our belief not in the prayer itself, or even its success or failure, but rather to place our belief in God, who hears our prayers. In this way, when we do pray, we are connected to God in such a way that He is right there with us. That means that even if God’s will differs from our prayer request, we are still left with being with Him, and that is far more important than ever receiving that for which we prayed.

In the end, all we want is to know that everything is going to be all right and that we are loved. So, if you stay connected to God, the God who rules the universe and everything in it, then wherever He is, you are, and then everything will surely be alright. Therefore, pray, pray all throughout your day, bringing God glory and enjoying Him forever. However, remember that God is a God of miracles, and when there is a knock at the door...go and check it out, for you might just find Jesus standing there, who ultimately is always the answer to our prayers.

Mighty and gracious God, help us to put all our faith in you, so that when you knock, we will not hesitate to answer. In Jesus name, Amen.